GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:556
ANSWERED ON:20.02.2003
OUTSTANDING DUES AGAINST PRASAR BHARATI
NARESH KUMAR PUGLIA;YEMPARALA VENKATESWARA RAO

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Space has asked Prasar Bharati to pay Rs.500 crores or face blackout;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the number of transponders are at present being used by Prasar Bharati; and

(d) the final decision taken in this regard ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) and (b): INSAT capacity of Department of Space is being utilized by PrasarBharati (Doordarshan & All India Radio) for more than 15 years. It is only in the financial year 2001-02, the Department of Space (DoS) hasasked for the payment of user charges from Prasar Bharati for an amountof Rs.144 crores for 2001-02 and Rs.172 crores for 2002-03 towards thepayment of 22 INSAT Transponders allotted to the Ministry of I&B.

(c) : 22 (twenty two) Transponders on INSAT Satellites and 3 (three)Transponders on Thaicom-3 Satellite allotted to Doordarshan by the DoS and 3 (three) Transponders on INSAT 3-C allocated to the AIR are in use.

(d) : The Ministry of I&B has taken up the matter with the Department ofSpace and stated that Prasar Bharati is a Public Broadcaster and its commercial revenue is incidental and forms only a minor fraction of its expenditure. It is largely funded by the Government. In view of the present mandate of social commitment of Prasar Bharati, it would be desirable to resolve the matter through Inter-Ministerial consultations.